

## LEAP YEAR IN HISTORY

By FREDERIC J. HASKIN

To-day is the day that makes a leap year of 1908. When the Great Architect of Creation made the universe, with its myriads of suns, moons, and stars, and fixed the laws whereby they should revolve in their allotted courses through limitless space and through countless years. He gave to this old earth of ours a path in which to travel around the sun. And it takes just enough longer than an even number of days for it to complete that circuit to put the reckoning of time at their wits' end to keep the calendar in harmony with the seasons. A year, to be exact, consists of 365.2422424 days, and how to handle that fraction of a day so as to keep the calendar exactly right is a problem never solved.

If a year consisted of 365.25 days, or 365 days and 6 hours, instead of 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds, counting time would be easy. As it is, when we add a leap year every fourth year we get just a little ahead of time. Then we come along to the end of a century with our leap years, and by that time we have gotten so much ahead that on the year ending the century we must not add the quadrennial day lest we get too far in advance of the earth's travels around the sun. But when we take these quadrennial leap years out we get a little behind time again, so that every 400th year we have to put one in again. This fractional part of a day makes us always just a little behind time, or a little ahead of it, as the case may be. The 4,000 years things will still be a day ahead of time, and it has been suggested that the years divisible by 4,000 be made not a leap year for twenty centuries at a time.

Russia has for some time been proposing a reform in the calendar. Unwilling from the time of Pope Gregory to accept his revision of the Julian calendar—through which she has from that day to this been out of time with the rest of the civilized nations in the reckoning of time—she now proposes to head the nations of the earth in a new world-wide revision of the calendar. It is true that not much is being heard of these proposals since the war with Japan, but every century the Julian calendar, to which she adheres, renders Russia further away from the mark of correct time, and sooner or later she will have to accept the Gregorian system or else persuade the world to make a change. But so thoroughly ingrained into the lives of men and nations has the present reckoning of time become that not until the Greek calendar is likely to be revised. Mathematicians have figured out a plan whereby the present system could be kept right for 100,000 years. At present we have thirty-two leap years in every 128 years. They figure that there were made to be thirty-one such leap years in that length of time, to keep our calendar and our grog of old time in harmony for 100,000 years to come. And not many of us are regarding seriously what will happen beyond that day.

Most interest centers in leap year because it is the year in which women are supposed to have the right to propose—even if she does not exercise that right. How did the idea originate? Myth and history both have something to say on the matter. Myth attributes it to a less personage than St. Patrick himself. As that worthy saint was going along the shores of Lough Neagle, after having driven the frogs out of the bogs and the snakes out of the grass, he was accosted by St. Bridget, who, with many tears and lamentations, told him that she had been arisen among the ladies in her nursery over the fact that they were barred from the privilege of popping the question. At that time celibacy, although approved by the church, was regarded as a wise thing, was not rigidly enjoined on the clergy. St. Patrick, a sternly single man himself, was so moved by the tears that he conceded the right of women to propose every second year. But St. Bridget protested, threw her arms around his neck and begged him to make it every fourth year. He responded that if she would only embrace him again he would make it so, and make leap year the longest year of all. At that time she proposed to him, but he had taken the vow of celibacy and had to console her with a silk dress and a kiss. And ever since, the legend runs, every man who refuses to marry a girl who proposes to him shall give her a silk dress and a kiss. What an opportunity to get husbands or silk dresses this year of grace 1908 does afford!

The supposition that women have a right to propose on leap year has historical warrant. It is said that a law was passed in Scotland in 1288, which read: "It is statuted and ordaind that during the reign of her maiest blisid Mageste, for ilk year known as lepe year, ilk maiden likey of both high and low estate shall be at the liberte to bespoken ye man she liketh: altho he refuses to talk her to his lawful wyfe, he shall be mulcted in ye sum of an pundis or less, as his estate may be, except and awis gif he can make it appear that he is bestidit to ane ither woman he shall be free."

A similar privilege was granted to the maidens of Florence and Geneva in the latter part of the fifteenth century, and there are books to prove that of actual advantage being taken of the leap rights of women in England in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and that the men who laughed at a woman who proposed were doomed to be buried without the benefit of clergy.

A remarkable leap year party was held by Rossini, the great musical composer, on February 29, 1844. He was seventy-two years old, and was then celebrating what he thought to be his eighteenth birthday. He declared on that occasion that it was his deliberate purpose to turn over new leaf and disregard the frivolities of his youth in the indiscretions of his teens. But even then he was celebrating only his seventeenth birthday, since the year 1850 was not a leap year, as he had counted it.

The first real reforms in the calendar were made by Julius Caesar, in 45 B. C. Before that time there were no leap years. He established one for every fourth year, and in 45 B. C. proclaimed that year one of 445 days, so that the calendar would be made to conform to the solar year. At that time the Julian Gregorian calendar was widely resisted by Protestant nations, on account of its having been prepared by a Pope, but one by one they joined in the procession. England adopted it in 1752, and advanced her time from September 3 to September 14. Among all the nations of the earth to-day only Russia and the Greek Church do not use the Gregorian calendar.

The laws of the stars are more unalterable than those of the Medes and Persians. There are those who never vary. They are always to be relied on to show up at the same time and the same place, and they give the sidereal day, the exact and scientific day. While the mean day as measured by the sun is all right when averaged for a year, it is yet a constantly changing quantity. Hence time is fixed by the stars. These stars are known as the "clock stars." The great observatories have the most delicately adjusted clocks in the world. It is the nearest free from every possible extraneous influence. So perfect has the astronomer made his figures on his map of the heavens that he can tell the time to the smallest fraction of a second by his observations. He takes his telescope—always a small one—anchors it firmly so that it will not have a hairs' breadth from east to west. Across the end of this telescope he stretches five spider webs. Then he waits for the looked-for star to cross the transit.

He observes several stars the same way, and when he completes his work it is so accurate that the courts of every nation are being persuaded to approach to absolute correctness of the time that can be had. The day and the year are based on the two movements of the earth. The one way we travel at the rate of more than 1,000 miles an hour. The other direction takes us through space at the rate of more than 65,000 miles an hour. The year of Jupiter is twelve times as long as that of Earth, and that of Uranus is eighty-four times as long as ours.

## To-morrow—Interurban Transportation.

## GIVE A HOUSE WARMING.

## New Sanatorium the Subject of Addresses at the Chapin.

A house warming was given by the National Benevolent Association in the new sanatorium, the Chapin, at Fourteenth and Chapin streets northwest, last night. Representative John Sharp Williams, of Mississippi, made an address, congratulating the executive board on the work accomplished by it, in getting the sanatorium on a paying basis and the strides made in getting new members.

Dr. Joseph Taber Johnson, president of the National Benevolent Association, and president of the medical department of Georgetown University, and Dr. Orlando Ducker, vice president of the association, both spoke on the condition of the undertaking. Dr. Johnson said it was not only the intention of the association to provide a sanatorium for the sick, but a clubhouse and school, and afford members of the association a home-like atmosphere.

Dr. Samuel H. Greene, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, and Dr. Samuel H. Woodrow, pastor of the First Congregational Church, spoke, and promised their earnest support. They praised the purpose of the association.

Dr. Ducker, having for eight years been an officer of a similar institute in Havana, Cuba, where 30,000 persons belong to the association, sees a better chance in Washington to build up an organization that will outdo the Havana organization.

The late Rev. Father Stafford was to have delivered a series of Shakespearean lectures in the month of February for the benefit of the association, and his place on the advisory board has been taken by R. Landis, of Indiana; Rev. Dr. Rowland Cotton Smith, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church; Rev. Dr. Wallace Radcliffe, pastor of New York Avenue Presbyterian Church; Representative John Sharp Williams; Dr. Samuel H. Greene, and James A. Sample, of the Treasury Department.

## LURED TO AMERICA.

## British Embassy to Look Into Englishman's Complaint.

James Hawkin, an Englishman, made complaint to the Department of Commerce and Labor yesterday that he had been brought to this country from England in violation of the alien contract labor law.

Hawkin said he had been induced to come to America by a man who represented himself as the agent of a West Virginia mining company, which would pay him \$4 or \$5 a day. Nineteen other Englishmen came over with him. On reaching the mines in a remote section of West Virginia, they found they would be paid only \$2.50 a day in case they worked in the mines and \$1.75 a day if they worked on the surface.

Several of the men attempted to leave the camp, but were apprehended and given their choice of working for the company or working on a public road under armed guard. Hawkin says he made his escape over the mountains, and after many rough experiences succeeded in reaching Washington. He reported his case to Secretary Morrison, of the American Federation of Labor; the British Embassy, and to the Department of Commerce and Labor. It is understood the British Embassy will make a representation in the matter to the State Department.

## Meeting for Men Only.

There will be a meeting for men only at the Mount Vernon Place M. E. Church, March 10, when Representative Richmond Pearson Hobson, of Alabama, will make an address.

## LANSBURGH &amp; BRO.

420-426 Seventh St. N. W.

WE OFFER TO-DAY

Women's New Spring Waists

Of net, in white or ecru, trimmed with bands of heavy lace, finished with Val. edge and insertion; the entire waist lined with silk—

for \$3.98

## CARNegie INSTITUTE TO BUILD

Permit Issued for Administration Building to Cost \$225,000.

A permit has been issued for the erection of the administration building of the Carnegie Institute on the southwest corner of Sixteenth and P streets northwest. The building will be of limestone and two stories in height. The frontage on Sixteenth street will be 127 feet, and on P street 100 feet.

The building will stand entirely detached, with sufficient lawn space surrounding it to furnish a setting. The main entrance will be from Sixteenth street. The steps will be of bluestone and the doors will be of bronze.

A. L. Penneck, of Philadelphia, was awarded the contract, and will commence work immediately. The building is to cost, when completed, \$225,000.

## SPECIAL TRADE TRAIN PLAN

General Meeting to Consider Project Called for Friday.

Wholesale Trade Committee of the Chamber of Commerce Discusses Idea.

Action was taken last night by the wholesale trade committee of the Chamber of Commerce to hold a special meeting next Friday night, for the purpose of considering the project of sending out a special trade train some time in April for the purpose of advertising the wholesale trade of the city. To this meeting will be invited merchants and others in Washington thought to be interested in the plan.

The committee listened to the plan of sending such a train through the States of Virginia and West Virginia, on a thirty-day trip, to visit thirty-six towns along the lines of the Baltimore and Ohio and the Chesapeake and Ohio railroads. The plan was described in detail by Ross P. Andrews.

It is proposed to send a train, consisting of one Pullman palace car and three baggage cars, in which the exhibits of the merchants will be carried. The cost of the train is estimated at \$5,000, approximately \$400 each for fifteen firms. The train would stop about one day at the following towns on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad: Frederick, Md.; Martinsburg and Berkeley Springs, W. Va.; Cumberland, Md.; Keyser and Piedmont, W. Va.; Oakland, Md.; Kingwood, Grant, Phillips, Bellington, Elkins, Fairmont, Morgantown, Mannington, New Martinsville, Parkersburg, and Huntington, W. Va.

On the line of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, the train would stop at Milton, St. Albans, Charleston, Montgomery, Thurmond, Hinton, Alderson, and Ronceverte, W. Va.; Clifton Forge, Staunton, Charlottesville, Gordonsville, Orange, Culpeper, Warrenton, and Manassas, Va. Members of the committee manifested a good degree of interest in the plan, questioned Mr. Andrews upon it at some length, and decided it would be better to have a larger number of interested persons present to pass upon the project before it should be decided to adopt it and carry it out.

It was announced yesterday that the evening set apart for the entertainment of the Board of Trade by the Chamber of Commerce, on March 10, would be postponed. That is the date for the regular meeting of the chamber. Another date will be determined upon at the meeting of the directors, next Wednesday afternoon.

## EMMET CELEBRATION PLANNED

## Irish Societies of Washington Hold Exercises To-morrow.

The Robert Emmet demonstration in honor of the 126th birthday anniversary of the Irish patriot, at the Columbia Theater to-morrow evening, promises to be the largest and most important of these annual events so far conducted by the United Irish Societies of Washington.

No less than five members of Congress are on the programme for addresses, and the musical and literary features are of a high order. The entire proceeds of the demonstration will be given to the Sisters of Mercy of the St. Catherine's Home, to help them liquidate the large debt which is on their building.

The committee having charge of the details have spared neither energy nor expense in providing a programme that will be a treat for all who may find it convenient to attend. Following is the programme:

PART I.  
Orchestral selection (Irish melodies), Prof. W. F. McArthur.  
Introductory address—Patrick J. Haligan, editor National Irishman.  
Address by the chairman of the evening—Hon. P. Moran, national director Ancient Order of Hibernians.  
Chorus, "Farewell But Welcome" (Moore), choir of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.  
Mrs. Nellie B. Keller, director.  
Address, Hon. Frank P. Flint, United States Senator from California.  
Soprano solo, "Kathleen Maureen" (Crouch), Mrs. A. J. Clements, of Baltimore.  
Address, Hon. James A. Hamilton, member of Congress from New Jersey.  
Violin solo (Irish melodies), Mrs. Mabel Montgomery Riley.

PART II.  
Orchestral selection (Irish melodies), Prof. W. F. McArthur.  
Recitation, "My Pledge to Speak of Ninety-Eight" (Ingram), Miss Lydia Sterling Fleming, R. E., of Philadelphia.  
Address, Hon. T. P. Gore, United States Senator from Oklahoma.  
Soprano solo, "My Wild Irish Rose," Miss Nellie E. Moran.  
Address, Hon. Michael E. Driscoll, member of Congress from New York.  
Soprano solo (selected), Mrs. Nellie B. Keller.  
Address, Hon. Joseph P. O'Connor, member of Congress from Massachusetts.  
Tenor solo, "A Nation Once Again" (Davis), Mr. J. Harry Maxwell.

Salvador Ratifies Peace Treaty.  
The State Department received a dispatch yesterday saying that Salvador had ratified the treaties adopted at the Central American peace conference held in this city several months ago. Guatemala is expected to ratify the treaties within several weeks. Honduras is the only republic which has not notified Secretary Root.

Enrages in Literary Pursuits.  
This retirement from active life, which lasted until his death, Mr. Burr utilized in various dictatorial literary pursuits. His specialty became literary research, and he became the intimate correspondent and associate of many famous thinkers and philosophers of his time.

He made exhaustive historical researches in order to satisfy himself that many so-called historical facts had no foundation in truth. So anxiously did he pursue this hobby, for which he had an absolute genius, that the late Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, who was called upon to write the "great literary detective," a title in which Mr. Burr took much satisfaction.

He championed the claim that Thomas Paine wrote the Letters of Junius and the Declaration of Independence, a belief to which he won over many leading historians and writers. He was one of the most pronounced of Baconians, maintaining that Francis Bacon was the author of all of Shakespeare's plays and poems, and that the author of the "great literary detective" was himself. He published a widely-distributed pamphlet, "Francis Bacon: Was He Shakespeare?" which he published in 1888.

He claimed to have discovered that the Shakespeare sonnets were addressed by Lord Bacon to the young Earl of Essex and his bride, in 1590; that some twenty short poems signed "Ignoto," A. D. 1589-1600, were composed by Bacon, and that William Shakespeare could not write, as proved by an analysis of his five varied autographs.

Mr. Burr claimed to have detected and exposed numerous literary frauds. In 1872 there appeared in the Easton (Pa.)

## DEATH OF W. H. BURR

Noted Philosopher, Savant, and Oldest Inhabitant.

WAS "LITERARY DETECTIVE"

Started to Earn Life as Portrait Painter, Acquired Proficiency in Shorthand, Became a Public Reporter, and Retired to Devote His Time to Literary Pursuits.

The death of William Henry Burr, known as "the literary detective," removed from Washington one of its oldest inhabitants and an interesting character.

The end came yesterday morning at 1:30 o'clock, after an illness attended with much suffering extending over a period of about two weeks. On account of his age, it was recognized by his family and the physicians that the end was near several days ago. There was a gradual failing up to the time of death, with no noticeable rally, although his mind remained clear until the last.

William Henry Burr was born on April 15, 1819, at a place situated on the verge of the then Adirondack wilderness, forty miles west of Albany, which afterward was given the name of Gloversville, a name suggested by the manufacture of deerskin gloves and mittens, first begun by Mr. Burr's father, in 1805. He was one of a family of seven children and was the last survivor, although all lived to an advanced age.

Old New York Families.  
The Burr family and the Mills family—the latter the maiden name of Mr. Burr's mother—were of the oldest families of New York State, tracing directly back to the Mayflower on the Mills side. The Burr family goes back to 1530. William H. Burr and Aaron Burr were of different

ancestry on this side of the Atlantic, although a collateral relationship exists in the English branches.

Mr. Burr's father, a rigid Calvinist, brought up his children carefully. William Henry Burr was kept at school constantly until after his graduation from Union College, Schenectady, in 1838, with the degree of master of arts.

Mr. Burr's mother was desirous that her son enter the ministry. Having discovered while at college that he had a fair talent for painting, and being expert on the flute and violin, Mr. Burr eschewed the ministry and the glove trade and went to New York City in 1838 for artistic instruction.

There he lived for seven years, pursuing the vocation of a portrait painter. He enjoyed considerable success. In 1845 he took up the study of shorthand, or "phonography," as it was then known, more as a pastime than with any idea of earning his living by its use.

Became Expert Reporter.  
Enthusiastic over the study, he finally became so proficient that he began soon to report lectures, among them Frederick Douglass and Lucette Mont. At the Democratic State convention of 1847, Mr. Burr was official stenographer, reporting for the Albany Atlas. He also reported a course of lectures by Prof. Louis Agassiz. His notes were published in the New York Tribune.

Until 1848 Mr. Burr reported for the Tribune. Then he came to Washington. In December, 1848, as first assistant on the corps of reporters for the Washington Times, which had made a contract to publish full proceedings of the United States Senate.

In 1854 the Union abandoned its contract and threw its reporters out of work. Mr. Burr returned to New York to enter formally upon the career of court and law reporter, with a partner, Mr. Lord. In 1851 he reported all the speeches of Louis Kossuth and accompanied him on his tour of this country, in the capacity of reporter. In 1862 he was engaged by the Congressional Globe as one of the official corps of reporters of the House of Representatives and came to Washington, and held the place until 1865, when he voluntarily resigned and sought retirement.

Strikes Blow at Standard.  
D. H. Farquharson, of the city engineer's department, Norfolk, and formerly a representative of the Standard Oil Company in that city, was the principal witness yesterday morning in the Standard Oil inquiry before an examiner of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Mr. Farquharson testified to the competitive methods of the Standard in Norfolk and the Norfolk territory, showing the company had consistently cut prices and underbid independent refiners in its endeavor to drive competitors out of business.

Funeral of Mr. Gardner.  
Funeral services for Robert D. Gardner, who died Tuesday, took place yesterday afternoon at his late residence, 1331 T street northwest, Rev. Albert Evans, pastor of the Metropolitan Methodist Church, officiating. The pallbearers were from Burnside Post, G. A. R., and Lafayette Lodge, F. A. M. Interment was in Arlington.

Lectures at the Y. W. C. A.  
Miss Ludema Sayre will preside at the "Friendship" meeting to be held in the Gymnasium of the Young Women's Christian Association, to-morrow afternoon at 4:30 o'clock.

Fleet Reaches Port Royal.  
The torpedo flotilla, in command of Lieut. William G. Mitchell, which left Charleston on February 25, for Mobile, where they were to participate in the Mardi Gras festivities, have put into Port Royal, S. C., on account of the stress of weather.

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6th St. & Pa. Ave.  
"THE BUSY CORNER"

## HOUSE NEEDS, 89c

WORTH \$1.25 TO \$2.00.

Keystone Meat or Food Choppers, with four different knives; family size.  
Family Scales that are guaranteed to weigh correctly up to 24 pounds.  
Tins. Kettles of best copper nickel plated, ebony trimmings; 6-quart.  
Plain White Porcelain Slop Jars, with side handles and cover; good size.  
Punch Bowls, on detachable stand, in cut or colonial style; 12-inch size.  
Set Mrs. Potts' Sad Irons, 3 irons, separate handle and stand; highly polished.

Ash Cans of best quality galvanized iron, with riveted handles; 20-gallon size.  
Two "World's Best" Gas Lights, complete with mantle and all-hoie globe.  
Wash Benches, made of clear selected stock; holds two tubs and wash boiler; No. 7 size.  
"Never Sag" Curtain Stretcher, of clear selected stock; full size.  
New Inverted Gas Light, complete with globe and mantle; guaranteed.  
Wash Boilers of best polished tin and copper bottoms; No. 7 size.

Argus a letter purporting to have been written by Cotton Mather "To Ye Aged and Beloved Mr. Eneas Holoroff," of London, saying that the general court had given secret orders to capture William Penn and a hundred more malignant Quakers on an incoming ship and sell them to Barbados for rum and sugar. At once, Mr. Burr exposed the sham.

Cotton Mather in 1682, the date of the letter given, was a divinity student, nineteen years of age, and not likely to be made the confidant of any "secret orders" of the General Court of Massachusetts. The names given in the letter were found to be fictitious, and it is now known the letter was concocted for sensational purposes.

After the death of Bishop Fenwick in Boston, in 1866, a letter was published purporting to have been written by him long before, describing the death-bed scene and alleged renunciation of Thomas Paine, in 1809, as witnessed by himself and a fellow-priest. The letter was republished from time to time. He read the daily papers, describing the death-bed scene and alleged renunciation of Thomas Paine, in 1809, as witnessed by himself and a fellow-priest. The letter was republished from time to time.

At the request of the editor of the Truth Seeker, Mr. Burr proved the letter to be a fabrication. The exposure is published in an appendix to Col. Ingersoll's "Thomas Paine Vindicated."

A Literary Recluse.  
Mr. Burr's later years in Washington were those of a literary recluse, although he had a few choice friends, who, like himself, were devoted to literary lore, and who were investigators of every new cult brought before the public.

Mr. Burr was a great reader. His work naturally caused him to spend many hours among the books of the Library of Congress. He read the daily papers and kept abreast of the times, the local newspapers often being favored with letters and articles from his pen.

His views of life, of politics, and religion were complex. He was always ready to grasp a new idea and fit it into his philosophy. There were scarcely any cults or isms of latter days that he had not thoroughly gone into. Although he passed through many mental vicissitudes regarding religion, his later years were marked by a decided leaning toward spiritualism.

The Secular League of this city regarded him as one of its foremost members, and on Sunday afternoons was the habit of giving little talks on current events and their relation to the social conditions of the day.

He was not a propagandist. While always willing to give his view, when asked to do so, he was not in the habit of endeavoring to convert any one to his way of thinking. That he himself was convinced of a point was sufficient.

He assumed the attitude of passivity with regard to current thought, and was a dilettante in everything toward which his interest leaned. Many examples of his portrait work are in existence to-day. It having been his privilege while in New York to paint many notable sitters.

Good Musician.  
He was known locally many years ago as a violinist of note, having been a member of the famous Georgetown Orchestra, in which he was first violin for some time. He was a man who had a kindly work for every one, who hated hypocrisy and unkind dealing. His generosity and charitable nature were in many ways exemplified, and many are the benefactions that were had at his hands.

Financial reverses, in which he lost his entire fortune, made his later years less comfortable than he had hoped for, but money to him was a means only of doing good, and his only concern at dying was a comfortable poor man was on account of others.

Mr. Burr was twice married. In 1850 he married Miss Julia Simonton, the daughter of James W. Simonton, of New York City, by whom he had one daughter, who survives him. In 1856 he was married to Miss Victoria A. Osborn, the daughter of the late William Osborn, an Englishman, also living in New York City. Mrs. Burr, who is still living in this city, had no children, although three grandchildren, the children of his only daughter, have been the pleasure of his grandfather's old age.

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A Literary Recluse.  
Mr. Burr's later years in Washington were those of a literary recluse, although he had a few choice friends, who, like himself, were devoted to literary lore, and who were investigators of every new cult brought before the public.

Mr. Burr was a great reader. His work naturally caused him to spend many hours among the books of the Library of Congress. He read the daily papers and kept abreast of the times, the local newspapers often being favored with letters and articles from his pen.

His views of life, of politics, and religion were complex. He was always ready to grasp a new idea and fit it into his philosophy. There were scarcely any cults or isms of latter days that he had not thoroughly gone into. Although he passed through many mental vicissitudes regarding religion, his later years were marked by a decided leaning toward spiritualism.

The Secular League of this city regarded him as one of its foremost members, and on Sunday afternoons was the habit of giving little talks on current events and their relation to the social conditions of the day.

He was not a propagandist. While always willing